

## GWPO Secretariat Environmental Policy 2012

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) Network currently comprises nearly 2,750 Partner Organisations located in 164 countries. The GWP Network is represented globally by 13 Regional Water Partnerships (RWP) and 80 Country Water Partnerships (CWP). The Network is supported by an intergovernmental organisation – the GWP Organisation (GWPO), based in Stockholm. In 2008, the GWP conducted a Network-wide iterative process leading to the development of the 2009-2013 Strategy. The GWP's mission is "to support the sustainable development and management of water resources at all levels". GWP has an integrated and holistic approach aiming at achieving social equity, economic efficiency, and environmental sustainability and it strengthens initiatives for facilitation of processes that leads to behavioural changes, to ensure the sustainable use of the most essential resource on Earth - water.

Although the work of GWP leads to improved social and environmental conditions, GWP acknowledges that activities connected to the Secretariat have a negative impact on the environment, and that procedures can be continuously improved to reduce these impacts. This Environmental Policy highlights the GWPO's overall commitment to environmental responsibility focusing on both direct and indirect impacts of the GWPO Secretariat. Direct impacts can be addressed by the Secretariat while indirect impacts of the rest of the network are the responsibility of all the RWP, CWP and Partners. However, the policy can work as a guideline to all GWP Network components to reduce their footprint on the environment.

### DIRECT IMPACTS

In the work of minimising direct environmental impacts of the GWPO Secretariat focus is on meetings and transportation, energy use, purchase of goods and services, and consumption and waste management following the aphorism 'reduce, reuse, and recycle'. Transportation is the biggest environmental impact of GWPO, however, working with a global network require short and long distance travels on a regular basis since face-to-face interaction is the most effective means for sharing knowledge and experience, building alliances and influencing behavioural change. In order to minimise the impacts and the carbon footprint of GWPO, the following actions are taken.

#### *Meetings and Transportation*

- Telephone and web based meetings should to the extent possible be facilitated to reduce travels to international meetings.
- Global meetings should to the extent possible be carried out by virtual means to avoid extensive travel by RWPs and GWPO.
- Environmentally certified hotels should be selected for meetings organised in Stockholm.
- The most environmental friendly means of transport should be chosen for travel. Short distance air travel should be avoided, and direct flights should be selected for longer travels.
- Necessary air travels should be climate compensated (see table 1).
- Public transportation or environmental friendly cars should to the extent possible be used for transportation to and from airports.

**Table 1.** Climate compensated carbon emissions by GWPO 2008-2011, based on all travels made by GWP Global Secretariat and GWP Technical committee, booked through Tranås travel agency.

Source: GWP 2012.

Year	GWPO expenditures	Climate compensation	Carbon per Euro expensed
2008	€ 3 427 000	264 tons	77 gram/€uro
2009	€ 3 109 000	243 tons	78 gram/€uro
2010	€ 3 352 000	210 tons	63 gram/€uro
2011	€ 3 139 000	240 tons	76 gram/€uro

### *Energy consumption*

- A low and efficient level of energy is used through the landlord who provides the heating and cooling system.
- The electricity is certified with “Bra miljöval” which sources from water and wind, striving for 100% environmentally certified and renewable electricity.
- PC screens and lights should be switched off after working hours
- Low energy light bulbs should be used for office lights

### *Purchase of goods and services*

- Office material should be environmentally certified products and rechargeable batteries should be selected.
- Purchase of stationary and new equipment should be to a needs only basis.
- Food and beverages should to the extent possible be environmentally and socially certified products.
- Give-aways should to the extent possible be environmentally and socially certified products.
- Office furniture should to the extent possible be purchased from second-hand sources.

### *Consumption and Waste management*

- Stationary should to the extent possible be reused.
- Paper should be efficiently used through avoiding printing when not necessary, default double sided printing, and black and white printing.
- Office waste such as batteries, light bulbs, paper, plastic, metal, etc. should be recycled.
- IT products and electronic waste should be properly recycled when not repairable.

## **INDIRECT IMPACTS**

The main vision of GWP is for a water secure world for social and economic development and for ecosystems. GWP promotes an integrated management approach for sustainable use and protection of water resources through different actions which indirectly impact the environment. However, it is important to highlight that water itself is a public good and it is the responsibility of the governments to manage a nation's water resources, GWP promotes an inclusive process of dialogue between governments, civil society and the private sector, based on sound information to reach consensus and achieve better decision-making on sustainable water resource use and management.

The GWP Network is committed to five principles and it is a main requirement for organisations to join as partners to commit to these. The five principles are: freshwater is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and management; water development and management should be based on a participatory approach involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels; women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water; water is a public good and has a social and economic value in all its competing uses, and; integrated water resource management is based on the equitable and efficient management and

sustainable use of water and recognises that water is an integral part of the ecosystem, a natural resource, and a social and economic good, whose quantity and quality determine the nature of its utilisation.

GWP works according to its 2009-2013 Strategy which consists of 4 strategic goals : 1) to promote water as a key part of sustainable national development; 2) address critical development challenges; 3) reinforce knowledge sharing and communications; and 4) to build a more effective network. In this section these goals are discussed in relation to the environmental challenges connected to the work of the whole GWP Network.

### ***1. Promote water as a key part of sustainable national development***

GWP supports actions for implementation of the IWRM concept at all levels. Incorporating water management plans in national strategies and applying the IWRM approach have a positive impact on the sustainable use of water, including water for maintaining a healthy environment, good quality and quantity of water supply and reduced pollution. Further, it can also prevent ecosystem degradation, help conserving biodiversity, and enhance ecosystem services in the areas where it is implemented. Even though IWRM is a holistic approach and ecosystems are taken into account, the urgent need for addressing social and economic development sometimes leads to a partial neglect of environmental issues. Through its work, GWP helps to raise the political profile of water, improve policy making and increase budget allocations for water management.

### ***2. Address critical development challenges***

GWP works with advocating solutions and supporting knowledge management for five critical challenges to achieve water security at global, national and regional levels. The challenges identified by the Network are climate change, food security, urbanisation, finance, and transboundary issues.

***Climate change:*** Climate change is arguably the most severe long-term threat to development. It affects the water cycle, sea level and rainfall variability, and thus crop production and the frequency and scale of floods and droughts. GWP promotes better water management as a mechanism to develop resilience to climate change effects. This can reduce the pressure on ecosystems from uncertain rains, floods and droughts, desertification, and other climate change-related conditions.

***Food security:*** Agricultural production is by far the main user of water (70%) around the globe, thus water for food production is a critical issue as populations grow. The high demand for water leads to degradation of water resources and aquatic ecosystems. GWP works to bring about change in relation to water and agriculture, with strong focus on the productivity of irrigation water and rain-fed agriculture. This strengthens the holistic view which also includes ecosystems, and the link between water security and food security.

***Urbanisation:*** 50 % of the world's population lives in urban areas and, with changing demographics characterised by massive migration into cities, by 2025 the percentage is projected to be 60 %. This situation poses many environmental challenges, such as pollution, water resource over-use, and high pressure on aquatic ecosystems. Dealing with these issues requires a holistic and coordinated approach to water allocation, management and development – an integrated approach. GWP also contributes to mitigating the negative impacts on the environment through its advocacy work for improved sanitation, wastewater treatment and better water management.

***Finance:*** Funding for water management initiatives is crucial to overcome water security challenges of today and in the future. Lack of funding can lead to a continuous unsustainable use of water resources and degradation of aquatic ecosystems. GWP builds awareness and capacity to address financing needs of water resources management at all levels, always considering an integrated approach that includes the protection of water sources and environmental processes

*Transboundary:* Demand for water, degradation of water resources, and sectoral and rural-urban conflicts over water are all increasing and will exacerbate already serious disputes. Such conflicts between stakeholders or water users often result in increased pressure on, and further degradation of the environment, shifting the focus from the need for preserving water ecosystems. GWP works to promote dialogue and enhance the understanding of possible benefit sharing resulting from sound water management at river basin level. The work of GWP on transboundary water management contributes to reducing the risk of conflicts and their negative impact on the environment.

### ***3. Reinforce knowledge sharing and communications***

This third goal is meant to facilitate the achievement of the other three strategic goals. GWP advocates for a coordinated development and management of water, land, and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of vital environmental systems. To this effect, GWP has made conceptual and technical contributions that have enhanced the understanding of integrated water resources management and the need for to considering social and economic development within the framework of environmental sustainability. By developing products, services, and platforms to facilitate communication of this knowledge, GWP is contributing to water management and sustainable development at local, national and global levels, increasing the know-how and understanding of water resources and valuable ecosystems.

GWP strives to raise awareness about the gains from protecting water-related ecosystems as a vital element to achieve water security. By also targeting actors outside the water community GWP improves their understanding of the importance of integrated water resources management amongst other sectors (i.e. finance, education, foreign affairs, etc.) and helps promoting a more meaningful dialogue between different stakeholders and sectors at multiple levels.

### ***4. Build a more effective network***

GWP is an extensive network which creates an opportunity for capacity building and knowledge sharing at all levels. Strengthening the network is imperative for GWP to enhance its ability to better support and influence national and regional policies and actions towards a sound, more environmentally friendly, management of water resources. Also implementing performance measurement will help identify potential areas to develop and push for further improvements at both, programmatic and operational level.

The need for extensive travels arises as part of the process of strengthening the network, building new alliances and strengthening existing connections, which negatively impacts the environment through increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and pollution. However, GWP is committed to reduce the carbon footprint through reducing the travel frequency, choosing more environmentally friendly transportation, climate compensation (see Table 2), and facilitation of online meetings and knowledge platforms. Likewise, GWPO, the RWPs and CWP are increasingly focusing on the uploading of information online to reduce the volume of printed materials.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The ultimate responsibility of ensuring the Environmental Policy is implemented lies with the Executive Secretary. Within the DIRECT IMPACTS areas, each position within the Secretariat which is affected by the mitigating measures outlined below, shall be responsible for ensuring that the measures are implemented and that monitoring can be carried out. The GWP Strategy requires that all measures taken are reported in the Annual Progress Review, under Strategic element 18 : “Reducing GWP’s carbon footprint”.